

[83] What is claimed is:

1. In a client system, a method for enhancing navigation of a video, comprising:  
receiving the video as it is streamed from a server over a computer network;  
receiving a first user request to display a first navigation video strip on a display device,  
wherein the first navigation video strip comprises a first plurality of video frames  
from the video;  
in response to the first user request, obtaining first instructions for displaying the first  
navigation video strip; and  
displaying the first navigation video strip on the display device in accordance with the  
first instructions.
2. The method of claim 1, wherein obtaining the first instructions comprises generating the  
first instructions.
3. The method of claim 1, wherein obtaining the first instructions comprises transmitting a  
first client request to the server to generate the first instructions.
4. The method of claim 3, wherein obtaining the first instructions further comprises  
receiving the first instructions from the server.
5. The method of claim 3, wherein obtaining the first instructions further comprises  
receiving a reference to the first instructions from the server.
6. The method of claim 1, wherein the first instructions are formatted according to the  
Synchronized Multimedia Integration Language.
7. The method of claim 1, wherein displaying the first navigation video strip comprises  
retrieving the first plurality of video frames from the server.
8. The method of claim 7, wherein the first plurality of video frames are retrieved from the  
server in accordance with the Real Time Streaming Protocol.

9. The method of claim 1, further comprising supporting user interaction with the first navigation video strip.
10. The method of claim 9, wherein supporting the user interaction comprises:  
receiving a user selection of one of the first plurality of video frames; and  
in response to the user selection, playing the video on the display device beginning at the selected video frame.
11. The method of claim 9, wherein the amount of time separating adjacent video frames in the first navigation video strip is substantially equal to a first time interval, and wherein supporting the user interaction comprises:  
receiving a second user request to modify the first time interval to a second time interval;  
in response to the second user request, obtaining second instructions for displaying a second navigation video strip, wherein the amount of time separating adjacent video frames in the second navigation video strip is substantially equal to the second time interval; and  
displaying the second navigation video strip in accordance with the second instructions.
12. The method of claim 1, wherein the method further comprises receiving user input about the number of video frames that are included in the first navigation video strip.
13. The method of claim 1, wherein the method further comprises receiving user input about the number of video frames in the first navigation video strip that are displayed on the display device.
14. The method of claim 1, wherein the method further comprises receiving user input about a location where the first navigation video strip is displayed.

15. The method of claim 1, wherein the method further comprises receiving a user selection of an option concerning how the video is managed while the first navigation video strip is displayed.
16. The method of claim 15, wherein the option is selected from the group consisting of scaling the video, cropping the video, and alpha-blending the video with the first navigation video strip.
17. The method of claim 15, wherein the option is selected from the group consisting of playing the video, pausing the video, and stopping the video.
18. In a server system, a method for enhancing navigation of a video, comprising:  
streaming the video to a client over a computer network;  
receiving a first client request to generate first instructions for displaying a first navigation video strip on a display device, wherein the first navigation video strip comprises a first plurality of video frames from the video; and  
generating the first instructions.
19. The method of claim 18, further comprising transmitting the first instructions to the client.
20. The method of claim 18, further comprising transmitting a reference to the first instructions to the client.
21. A client system configured to facilitate enhanced navigation of a video, comprising:  
a processor;  
memory in electronic communication with the processor;  
a video player configured to implement a method comprising:  
receiving the video as it is streamed from a server over a computer network;

receiving a first user request to display a first navigation video strip on a display device, wherein the first navigation video strip comprises a first plurality of video frames from the video;

obtaining first instructions for displaying the first navigation video strip; and

displaying the first navigation video strip on the display device in accordance with the first instructions.

22. The client system of claim 21, further comprising a video strip generator that generates the first instructions in response to the first user request, and wherein obtaining the first instructions comprises receiving the first instructions from the video strip generator.

23. The client system of claim 21, wherein obtaining the first instructions comprises transmitting a first client request to the server to generate the first instructions.

24. The client system of claim 23, wherein obtaining the first instructions further comprises receiving the first instructions from the server.

25. The client system of claim 23, wherein obtaining the first instructions further comprises receiving a reference to the first instructions from the server.

26. The client system of claim 21, wherein the first instructions are formatted according to the Synchronized Multimedia Integration Language.

27. The client system of claim 21, wherein displaying the first navigation video strip comprises retrieving the first plurality of video frames from the server.

28. The client system of claim 27, wherein the first plurality of video frames are retrieved from the server in accordance with the Real Time Streaming Protocol.

29. The client system of claim 21, wherein the method implemented by the video player further comprises supporting user interaction with the first navigation video strip.

30. The client system of claim 29, wherein supporting the user interaction comprises:  
receiving a user selection of one of the first plurality of video frames; and  
in response to the user selection, playing the video on the display device beginning at the  
selected video frame.
31. The client system of claim 29, wherein the amount of time separating adjacent video  
frames in the first navigation video strip is substantially equal to a first time interval, and wherein  
supporting the user interaction comprises:  
receiving a second user request to modify the first time interval to a second time interval;  
in response to the second user request, obtaining second instructions for displaying a  
second navigation video strip, wherein the amount of time separating adjacent  
video frames in the second navigation video strip is substantially equal to the  
second time interval; and  
displaying the second navigation video strip on the display device in accordance with the  
second instructions.
32. The client system of claim 21, wherein the method further comprises receiving user input  
about the number of video frames that are included in the first navigation video strip.
33. The client system of claim 21, wherein the method further comprises receiving user input  
about the number of video frames in the first navigation video strip that are displayed on the  
display device.
34. The client system of claim 21, wherein the method further comprises receiving user input  
about a location where the first navigation video strip is displayed.
35. The client system of claim 21, wherein the method further comprises receiving a user  
selection of an option concerning how the video is managed while the first navigation video strip  
is displayed.

36. The client system of claim 35, wherein the option is selected from the group consisting of scaling the video, cropping the video, and alpha-blending the video with the first navigation video strip.

37. The client system of claim 35, wherein the option is selected from the group consisting of playing the video, pausing the video, and stopping the video.

38. A server system configured to facilitate enhanced navigation of a video, comprising:  
a processor;  
memory in electronic communication with the processor;  
a video stream server configured to stream a video to a client over a computer network;  
a video strip generator configured to implement a method comprising:  
receiving a first client request to generate first instructions for displaying a first  
navigation video strip that comprises a plurality of video frames from the  
video; and  
generating the first instructions.

39. The server system of claim 38, wherein the method further comprises transmitting the first instructions to the client.

40. The server system of claim 38, further comprising transmitting a reference to the first instructions to the client.

41. A set of executable instructions for implementing a method for enhancing navigation of a video that is being streamed from server to a client over a computer network, the method comprising:

receiving a request to generate video strip instructions for displaying a navigation video  
strip that comprises a plurality of video frames from the video; and  
in response to the request, generating the video strip instructions while the video is being  
streamed from the server to the client.

42. The set of executable instructions of claim 41, wherein the method further comprises providing the video strip instructions to a video player.

43. The set of executable instructions of claim 41, wherein the method further comprises providing a reference to the video strip instructions to a video player.

44. The set of executable instructions of claim 41, wherein the method further comprises receiving user input about the number of video frames that are included in the navigation video strip.

45. The set of executable instructions of claim 41, wherein the method further comprises receiving user input about the number of video frames in the navigation video strip that are displayed on the display device.

46. The set of executable instructions of claim 41, wherein the method further comprises receiving user input about a location where the navigation video strip is displayed.

47. The set of executable instructions of claim 41, wherein the method further comprises receiving a user selection of an option concerning how the video is managed while the navigation video strip is displayed.

48. The set of executable instructions of claim 47, wherein the option is selected from the group consisting of scaling the video, cropping the video, and alpha-blending the video with the navigation video strip.

49. The set of executable instructions of claim 47, wherein the option is selected from the group consisting of playing the video, pausing the video, and stopping the video.